

ATTIRE FOR FLOOR GUESTS - PROPOSED LANGUAGE

At the July 1, 1999, meeting of the Legislative Management Committee, the discussion included comments concerning decorum and dress by guests, i.e., students, on the floor. The committee requested a statement be included in the packet of tour guide materials sent to schools informing the schools of the proper attire students must wear to be admitted as guests on the floor.

TOUR GUIDE PROGRAM MATERIALS

Early in December preceding a legislative session a letter is sent to all principals of North Dakota high schools. The letter describes the legislative tour guide program, how to schedule a legislative tour, the best time to visit the Legislative Assembly, the responsibilities of school officials, and other related programs and tours. A copy of a letter sent in December 1998 is attached to this memorandum as Appendix A.

A copy of this letter is also sent to all members of the Legislative Assembly, notifying them of the legislative tour guide program. Under the program, the tour guide lectures student groups on the legislative process and notifies legislators of the dates and times when high schools from their districts are scheduled for tours.

In addition to the memorandum provided to high school principals, a list of nine tips is provided to principals. A copy of *Tips to Help Plan Your Legislative Visit* is attached as Appendix B. Note that paragraph 2 provides: "Dress should be appropriate for the occasion. Caps are not allowed to be worn in legislative chambers or Supreme Court."

PROPOSED LANGUAGE ON STUDENT ATTIRE

The suggestion with respect to proper attire would fit after paragraph 2, regarding appropriate dress for the occasion. Suggested language is:

A legislator is allowed to have one guest per day sit with that legislator on the floor of the chamber. In order to maintain proper decorum, a student sitting as a guest on the floor must be suitably attired. No blue jeans with T-shirts or sweatshirts. Males must wear ties and sport coats or suit coats. Females must wear dresses or skirts of modest length or dress slacks.

The duties for pages and bill book clerks as distributed by the Senate and applied to pages under the Senate's "Page for a Day" program provided: "Dress properly and conduct yourself with proper decorum. Attire for male pages are coat, shirt and tie, for female pages, dress pants, dresses or skirts. No jeans are allowed."

The 1999 *North Dakota Senate Decorum Guidelines* provided: "Legislators and employees shall be suitably attired. No blue jeans. Men must wear ties

and suits or sport coats and slacks. Women shall wear dresses and skirts of modest length, pantsuits, or business suits."

The 1999 House *Rules of Decorum* provided: "Legislators and employees to be suitably attired."

AUGUST COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

At the August 30, 2000, meeting of the Legislative Management Committee, members discussed the proposed language on student attire and made these suggestions:

1. That sweaters are acceptable;
2. That a sport coat or tie not be required;
3. That torn or ripped jeans not be allowed;
4. That T-shirts with questionable sayings or statements not be allowed;
5. That the restriction be suitable attire; and
6. That suitable attire allows shirts with collars, allows jeans or pants without holes, rips, or tears, but does not allow tight-fitting clothing.

REVISED PROPOSED LANGUAGE ON STUDENT ATTIRE

As a result of the suggestions at the August meeting, suggested language with respect to proper attire is:

A legislator is allowed to have one guest sit with that legislator on the floor of the chamber. In order to maintain proper decorum, a student sitting as a guest on the floor must be suitably attired. Suitable attire does not include articles of clothing that depict, promote, or advertise violence or the use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs, or that display pictures, writing, or representations that are obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, or sexually suggestive.

If specific types of clothing are to be allowed or prohibited, questions could arise as to application to males and females, e.g., "shirts with collars" would exclude mock turtleneck and turtleneck-style shirts, collarless dress shirts, and many styles of ladies' blouses. Questions could also arise as to specific types of clothing, e.g., "sweaters" could include sleeveless (vest), cardigan, V-neck, crew neck, mock turtleneck, and turtleneck style jackets or pullovers (compared to the requirement that shirts have collars); and "sweatshirts" are pullover shirts, usually of heavy cotton jersey, but if made with other fabrics are similar to crew neck sweaters. If a listing is desired, a possibility is "Suitable attire does not include clothing with rips, tears, or holes; clothing that is tight-fitting; and tee shirts."

ATTACH:2